REMARKS

Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks. Claims 1-20, 30-37, 38-53, and 64-72 are pending in the application. No claims have been allowed. Claims 1, 18, 19, 20, 30, 37, 64, 67, 69, and 71 are independent.

Restriction Requirement

Applicants acknowledge the restriction requirement and elect Group I (claims 1-20, 30-37, and 64-72). In the interest of preserving the excess claims fees already paid, applicants have amended claims 38-53 (formerly in Group II) to depend from claim 1 (directly or indirectly), so they can now be properly examined in conjunction with the claims of Group I. No new matter is added thereby.

Applicants have canceled claims 21-29 from Group II and the claims for Groups III-VI, but expressly reserve the right to pursue such claims in divisional or other applications.

Request for Interview

If any issues remain, the Examiner is formally requested to contact the undersigned attorney prior to issuance of the next Office Action in order to arrange a telephonic interview. It is believed that a brief discussion of the merits of the present application may expedite prosecution. Applicants submit the foregoing formal Amendment so that the Examiner may fully evaluate Applicants' position, thereby enabling the interview to be more focused.

This request is being submitted under MPEP § 713.01, which indicates that an interview may be arranged in advance by a written request.

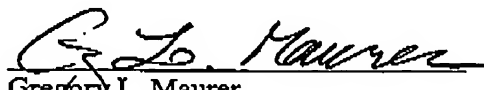Attorney Reference Number 5437-65503-01
Application Number 10/684,272

Conclusion

The claims in their present form should now be allowable. Such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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